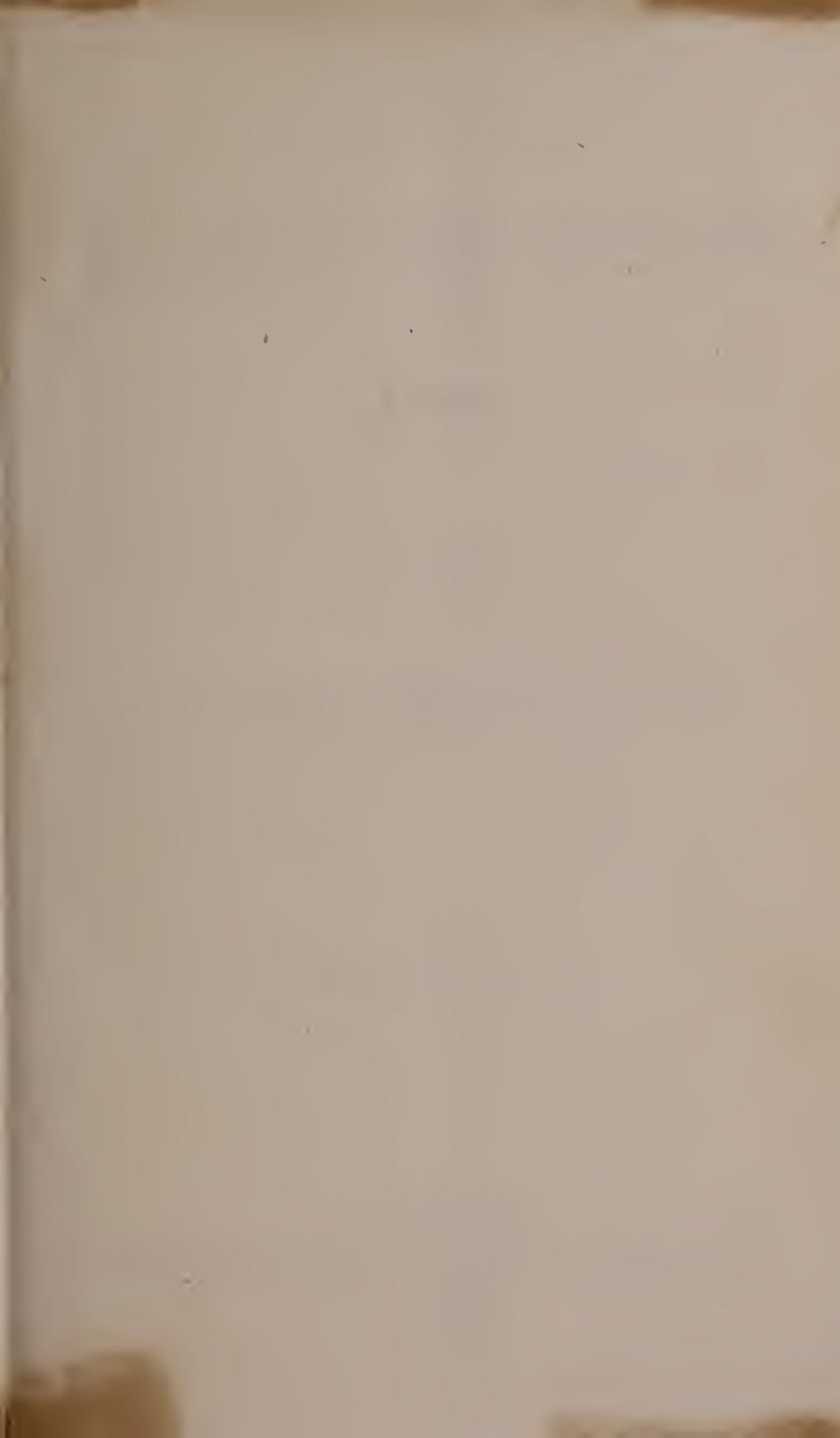


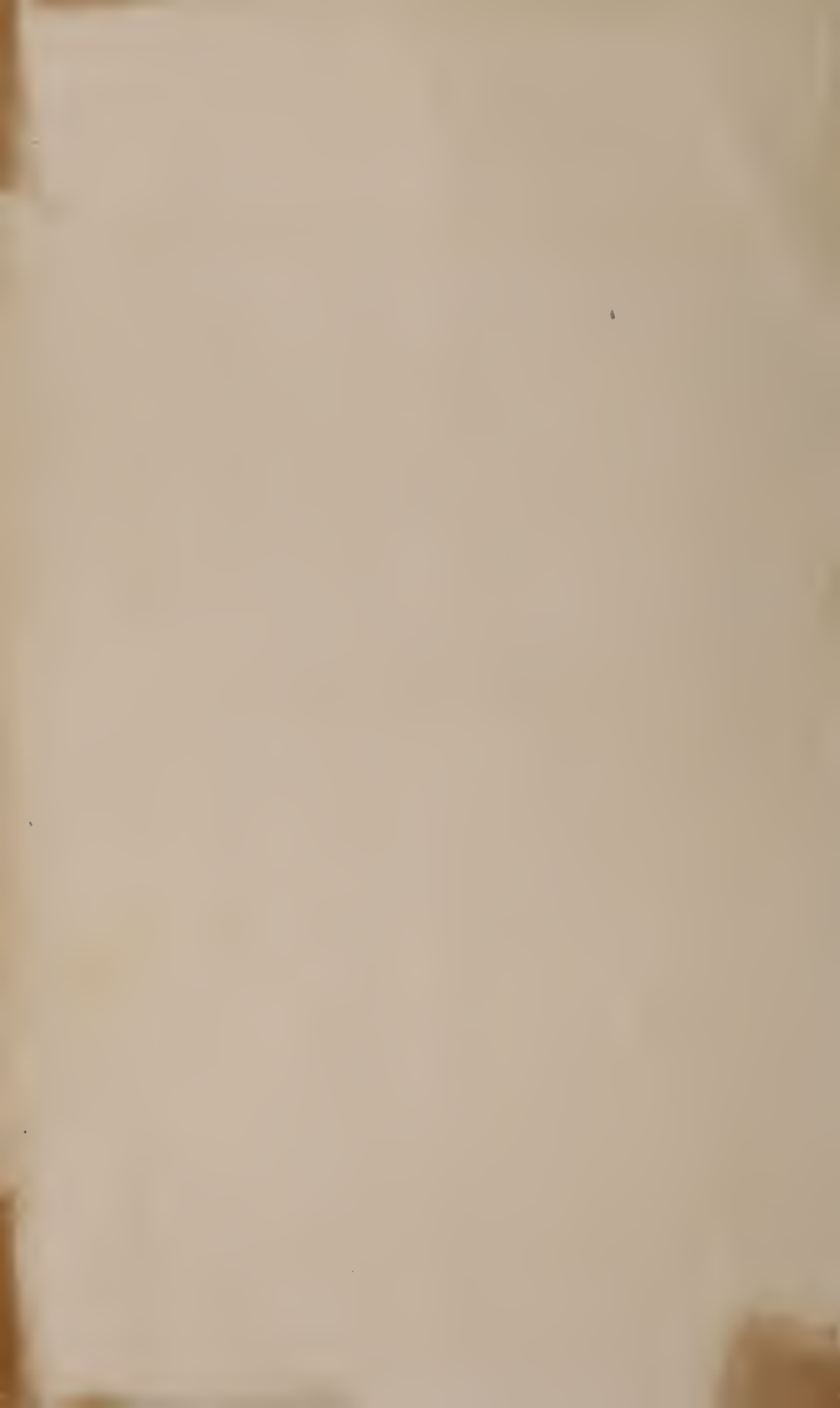
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THE

V. J.

BANNER OF THE COVENANT.

1850.

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JANUARY, 1850.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

NEARER HOME.

WHEN the traveller, who has been long absent, is coming near the home he loves so well, his heart is filled with joy. His mind rests but little on the things around him, and the toils and discomforts which he may have suffered are forgotten. The hope of soon meeting with those who are so dear to him, and the happiness he shall enjoy in their society, cause him to disregard present troubles, and inspire him to bear any hardships, and encounter any difficulties. In proportion as he gets nearer home does he feel more buoyant, more vigorous, and more happy.

So, certainly, should it be with the true Christian. While in this world, he is as a traveller journeying to his heavenly home. *There* are the objects of his highest love—there his treasure, and there his heart. The difficulties of his Christian progress, the distresses and the dangers which it presents, should be but little regarded, since they will all soon be over, and he will be at *home*. Each moment, as it speeds onward, carries him so much nearer to the other world; and, hence, the flight of time, which to others is so melancholy, to him is full of pleasure, since it diminishes the separation between him and heaven—since it brings him *nearer home*.

It is, then, *an important inquiry* whether or not we feel thus as time is carrying us onward to eternity. Do we feel the *regret* which leaving home generally causes, or the joy which is connected with returning to it? We may judge in this way where our affections are placed. If we sorrow, as we find worldly enjoyments receding and vanishing, then our home is *behind* us in the *world*, which, by the course of nature, we are always leaving, even though we may yet be not entirely removed from it. If our home were *before* us, and we were approaching it, would we not feel differently?

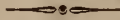
It is true, even the person who is going home may leave behind him some things he may have loved; but yet he would think it wrong to pine after these, as if the things to be had at his own home were not to be preferred. The Christian may take pleasure in the bounties of Divine providence which have been bestowed upon him in this world, but he will feel that he does dishonour to the better things reserved in heaven, to set his heart upon them, or mourn when he is called to leave them.

So, too, even in regard to beloved friends and relations. His dearest connexions are those in whom he has discerned the image of his Saviour, and he knows that *their* home is the same as *his*. He expects, therefore, to meet them where “the whole family in heaven and in earth”

shall be assembled together. He may naturally mourn that he parts with them, though only for a season; but he is cheered by the hope that soon he will meet with them again. And should there be among those he loves some who give no reason for such a hope in regard to them, his heart is poured out in him on their behalf, that they may be brought within the bond of the covenant, may have like precious faith, and may at last meet with him in heaven. He leaves them, with humble, earnest faith, to God, and so his soul has peace. What *consolation*, then, may he enjoy, who is in such a state as this? Time may be ploughing its furrows in his brow, or scattering its gray hairs upon his head, or bending his back under the weight of years, but yet time is doing for him what he most desires,—it is bringing him nearer home. As he notices how its days, and months, and years are passing, he rejoices because his journey is so much the less. Every billow which has passed over him, he finds has brought him nearer to the shore; every conflict he has met with has gained him ground. “Now is his salvation *nearer* than when he believed.”

Such considerations give him great *encouragement to exertion*. When he begins to droop, he thinks of home, and his strength returns to him. It is worth his labour to struggle onward, because each effort brings him nearer home. Here, indeed, he must always see only “through a glass darkly;” but he can discern objects better the nearer he approaches them. He perceives that he sees them more distinctly now than he did some time before. As each successive year he climbs up higher, he has a wider, clearer prospect. He is encouraged by the progress he is making, and he sees there is a reality and an excellence in the objects he is seeking: he is, therefore, incited to strive more vigorously to obtain them. As he is getting nearer to them, he hopes he shall at last get all the way to them.

Reader! are such *your* feelings? A new year has arrived, and *eternity* is now nearer to you than it ever was before. How do you feel in view of this solemn fact? Examine your heart, and try to ascertain your state in the sight of God. Appropriate not to yourself the consolations and encouragements of the Christian, if you have no right to them; but seek, O seek, to possess his *character*, and then you may possess his *consolations*.



[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

DUTY OF CHRISTIAN EXERTION.

Man is made for *action*. The chief of the works of God, he is not like the lofty mountain, an object truly grand and sublime, but yet perfectly motionless;—he is not like the fragrant and beautiful plant, endowed with life, but confined to a single spot of earth;—he is not like even the inferior animals, able to move with more or less rapidity within their prescribed limits, in their appropriate elements, but destitute of intellectual and moral powers, and destined at dissolution to go down to the lower parts of the earth:—superior to them all, he possesses such faculties of mind and powers of body as enable him to rise higher than the birds of heaven, to dive deeper than the monsters of the ocean, to pass over the earth more rapidly than the wind-footed rein-deer. The formation of his body, and the constitution of his mind, prove him to be, above all other animals, meant for action.

Nor is action, in itself, a source of pain. How much would we suffer if wholly prevented from moving our bodies, and how much more if we were unable to exercise our minds, were we to remain conscious of our condition? Agreeable employment is far preferable to idleness. The curse pronounced on our first parents was not *labour*—that was their lot before the fall—it was *excessive, unrequited* toil. “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. *Thorns and thistles* shall it bring forth to thee.” The blessing pronounced on the man who fears the Lord, in the 128th Psalm, is not “thou shalt eat,” but “thou shalt eat of the labour of thine hands.” Labour makes pleasant what it procures for us.

Labour is not to be considered as *dishonourable*. More than two thousand years have passed since a celebrated poet exclaimed, “Industry is no disgrace; but idleness is a disgrace.” The Lord Jesus says, “He that is the greatest among you, shall be your servant.” And he himself, though the King of kings and the Lord of lords, thought it not unsuitable to spend the time he passed in this world in active and laborious employment. In his youth, he is supposed to have been engaged as a carpenter, and, from the time he commenced his public ministry, he went about continually doing good. “I am among you,” said he to his disciples, “as one that serveth.” The person who is engaged in honest labour, so far from being an object of contempt, should be an object of praise. The industrious mechanic or labourer bears in his hardened hands, or on his weather-beaten countenance, a most honourable certificate that, so far, he is living in obedience to that universal law of labour under which our Creator has placed us.

The Gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST recognises this principle. It directs man to the great object he should labour to promote—the Divine glory; and it lays down rules by which he is to govern his conduct. It also furnishes motives of the noblest and most exhilarating character, to make us diligent in business: announcing the Divine command—presenting the example of the blessed Saviour himself—and showing the connexion between the degree of activity here, and the proportionate amount of happiness hereafter.

Every Christian, then, is to labour in the cause of CHRIST. God says to him, “Go, work in my vineyard.” Besides duties of a more private and personal character, he is under obligation to society at large. “None of us liveth to himself;” and the apostle tells us, “each must please his neighbour for his edification,” reminding us of the character of CHRIST, “who pleased not himself,” but gave, in his whole life, an unparalleled and most illustrious example of disinterested benevolence. Who is there, then, that will refuse or neglect to do something for the glory of God, and for the good of men? All should, and all can.

FRUITS MEET FOR REPENTANCE.

Mr. Editor,—In looking over some old papers lately, I met with the following in some letters addressed by the Rev. A. Edson to the conscience. It is an illustration of the position that an evidence of a saving repentance is found in an honest determination to perform every known duty; for if a person cannot sincerely be sorry for sin, without a determination to forsake it, so neither can he be for the neglect of a known duty, unless he determines to perform it.—*Chris. Inst.*

Several years since, at a time of revival, the pastor of a church, in the course of his visits, inquired of the father of a large family, who was not a professor of religion,

how he felt towards that important subject.—The reply was prompt;—“*I have a hope, sir.*” Indeed! how long have you thought yourself a Christian? “About ten years.” “And if you so long have thought yourself a Christian, why have you never acknowledged Christ before the whole world, and obeyed his dying injunction, ‘This do in remembrance of me?’”

“Why, to tell you the truth, sir, there are some members of the church who have not used me very well,—one of them is Deacon S—. He has conversed with me on the subject of my hope,—and did not seem to think that I was a Christian; and, as he has been one of the persons who attended at the examination of candidates, I knew he would oppose my being admitted. I have thought of joining a church in an adjoining town, and conversed with the minister about it, but, somehow, it was never done. And then, again, I wanted to have my wife come forward with me;—but she did not seem to see her way clear,—and, for ten years, I have been waiting for her;—as she has, recently, indulged hope,—I trust, now, to have her company.”

“But,” said the pastor, “if you are really a Christian, I should not have thought these excuses would have satisfied you for so long a time. The fact that some had used you ill,—if that is the case, would hardly justify your disobeying Christ.—And, as to waiting for your wife to make a profession of religion, that is a very mistaken view of duty. A husband may, with just as much propriety, wait for his wife to repent, or love God, or pray, before he would do it, as to wait for her to get ready to make a profession of religion, if she is not a Christian. But to pass over this subject, for the present; in relation to your hope, if it is a good one, it must have led you to do all that you knew to be duty. A hope that will not lead to this, will prove to be but as the spider’s web, at last. Now, sir, I presume, if you think yourself a Christian, you love the duty of prayer.”

“I do not live without praying, sir.”

“And I presume,” said the minister, “that you think family prayer to be a duty, for every Christian head of a family.”

“Most certainly,” was the reply.

“I presume, then, you have maintained worship in your family that have been growing up around you, since you think you became a Christian.”

“Why—no—sir,—I have not felt like really praying in my family.”

“But, you think it to be a *duty*, for every Christian; if I understood you.”

“Why, yes, sir, I think it to be a duty, but you know, we are none of us perfect—we offend in many things, and in all come short.”

“But you intend commencing family worship.”

“Why, as to that, I cannot say, exactly.”

“But, how, dear sir, do you get along with a hope which lets you live, year after year, in the neglect of what you and we acknowledge to be a Christian duty?”

“O, sir, I pray that God will forgive me.”

“But how do you think that God will regard such a prayer? Just look at it, for a moment. You go, and tell God, that you have done wrong in neglecting to pray in your family,—that you are sincerely sorry for it, and ask Him to forgive you. And suppose God should reply, ‘Do you intend to commence family-worship to-day?’—O, no, you reply, I have not thought of doing it to-day. ‘Do you intend doing it to-morrow?’ I hardly think I shall, you reply. ‘Do you intend ever to commence praying in your family?’ Why, as to that, I cannot say exactly. Now, my dear sir, what do you suppose God will think of such a prayer? You tell him, you have done wrong, in not praying thus, and that you are sorry for it,—but yet, at the same time, *you do not intend ever to perform that duty*, for the neglect of which you are so sorry! Would such a prayer be any thing less than ‘*ABOMINATION*,’ in the sight of God?”

D.

Theological Discussions.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

“THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.”

Faith, in the Scriptures, is used in different senses. Sometimes it signifies simply a speculative belief in any thing; sometimes it is put for the faithful themselves; thus the “household of faith” means the family of the faithful. It also means the new revelation of the will of God made in the gospel, and in this sense it is used in the passage

where the direction is given to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;” and lastly, *faith* signifies a grace or gift bestowed by GOD, under the influence of which sinners are enabled to receive and rest upon CHRIST as he is offered in the gospel. In these last two senses, CHRIST may, with great propriety, be said to be “the author and finisher of our faith.”

The word here translated “author” occurs several times in the New Testament. In one place, it is rendered *captain*, as in the passage where CHRIST is called “the *captain* of our salvation,” Heb. ii. 10; and in another, it is rendered *prince*, as Acts iii. 15. Some translate it the *beginner*; but it matters little which of these meanings be taken, as nearly the same idea is conveyed by all. CHRIST is the captain, the leader, the prince, the source, or first cause, and author of our salvation, of life, of faith.

With respect to the revelation of the will of GOD, CHRIST may particularly be considered as the author of the glad tidings revealed in the New Testament. “God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners,” says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, “spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his SON.” Heb. i. 1, 2. In this revelation, we have contained the true faith: we are informed what we are to believe concerning GOD, and what is our duty in all the circumstances in which we may be placed. There is much of the gospel contained in the Old Testament. CHRIST is the only Saviour of sinners, and it was by him that all the saints of the Old Testament times found acceptance in the sight of GOD. It was by faith in him as the promised Saviour, that Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain; that Abraham was justified; that any holy men of old obtained the heavenly inheritance; of this faith, whether found in the Old Testament or the New, CHRIST is the author. And he is also called its finisher, because on him it terminated; all the promises, nay, all the prophecies of the Old Testament, were connected with the Messiah, with whom, says Daniel, the vision was sealed up. With him our faith begins; in him it ends: we are not to seek for another revelation more full; for we have all that God designs to give us—a perfect and sufficient rule of belief and practice.

CHRIST is the author of faith considered as a gift or grace. That faith in CHRIST is a grace, we need hardly stop to prove. We have seen that he is the author of faith, meaning the glad tidings of salvation, and we will refer to the Bible to prove that he is the author of that faith whereby a sinner receives him, and rests upon him for salvation. The Apostle John (1 John v. 4) tells us, that “faith is the victory which overcometh the world,” and in the following verse he inquires “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that JESUS is the SON of GOD,” and this faith, he informs us, is “born of GOD.” To the saints at Philippi, the apostle says, “To you *it is given* to believe on CHRIST,” Phil. i. 29; and in Acts iii. 16, the healing the lame man is ascribed to faith, which is “by the LORD JESUS CHRIST.” Faith, then, being a grace, comes in the same way as all other heavenly graces come, through the atonement. By it CHRIST purchased for believers a right to all new covenant blessings. It is implanted in the heart by the SPIRIT of CHRIST, and by him it is maintained, and increased, and brought to perfection.

This faith holds a most prominent place in the system of redemption.

“Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST,” is the constant exhortation of all the inspired writers. By this faith, sinners are justified in the sight of God, they are not dealt with according to their sins; but they are regarded as clothed upon with the righteousness of Him who is without sin. Faith is the bond of union between the sinner and his Redeemer, and thus united to his mystical body, the believer becomes one with CHRIST, and, in virtue of this union, receives out of his fulness all spiritual blessings. By this faith, we not merely assent to what is contained in the sacred writings as true, but we *feel* it; we learn our sinfulness—we perceive the ruin that awaits us if we are not rescued by a Divine power, and the impossibility of being saved unless by the atonement of JESUS. This faith is essential to the Christian’s journey through life. It is his motive to action—he walks by faith. He has confidence in his Saviour, and knowing whom he has believed he presses onward for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in CHRIST JESUS. With faith, all that is necessary to salvation is furnished, and well may the Christian, therefore, be directed to “look unto JESUS as the author and finisher of his faith,” since thereby his sins are pardoned, his salvation is secured; CHRIST himself, with whom God will freely give us all things, is received into the heart.

OMEGA.

Obituary.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

OBITUARY OF MR. JAMES PEACOCK, CHIMOQUEE, NEW BRUNSWICK.

MR. WILLIAM PEACOCK, late Ruling Elder in the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Chimoguee, was born in Prince Edward’s Island, January 1, 1785. Three months before his birth his father was lost in a storm at sea, so that he never knew the sweet endearment of a father’s smile, nor the protection of a father’s care. But, though his earthly parent was thus taken away, he was taken up by *Him* who is the Father of the fatherless.

His history furnishes a bright example of the powerful influence which early training exerts upon the mind; for when quite a child his mother taught him the Shorter Catechism; and when, in after-life, his lot was cast for a considerable time among the Methodists, yet he never adopted their sentiments. In reviewing his early life, he used frequently to say, that but for this circumstance, most likely he would have been a Methodist.

When about sixteen years old, he removed from the Island to the parish of Botsford, New Brunswick. About this time he was very assiduous in acquiring as much education as the common schools afforded. Indeed, one of the most remarkable features in his character was a thirst for knowledge. His religious impressions were always favourable to Presbyterianism. And when Rev. A. Clarke, of the Covenanting Church, Ireland, about twenty-one years ago, arrived in the province, he was among the first to attend his preaching, and very soon applied for membership. Not long after this, when, by the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. C., the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Chimoguee was formed, he was nominated and duly ordained *Ruling Elder*. This office he continued to fill with much acceptance as long as he lived.

During the early part of last winter he suffered much with a heavy cough, but in the spring he was much better. About six weeks before his death he was attacked with an inflammation in one of his limbs; and at the same time his cough increased so rapidly upon him, that it was very evident he was

under the influence of consumption. As his disease increased he seemed to be depressed in spirit, and for some time he was troubled with doubts and fears as to his eternal weal. But he took as his assurance of hope the precious promises of the Bible. Many passages might be mentioned which cheered and comforted him; but Rom. viii. 38, 39, seemed to give him special comfort on all occasions: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, &c., shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The book of Psalms, also, was very precious to him; and he cheered the weariness of his lingering illness by communing with his God in the words of these sweet songs. This was so delightful to him, that even in his sleep he would be engaged in it. The songs of Zion, especially in the time of affliction, are to Christ's beloved ones as the "best wine, which goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."

On the Wednesday before his death he called his family to his bed-side, and directed his oldest son to read the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis. When the reading was over, he gave them suitable instructions and advice; and, as he was about to leave them, he charged them not to fall out among themselves. He expressed much satisfaction in leaving his children members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. During the last few days of his life he was only able to speak a word or two at a time; but he was full of hope, anxiously waiting to depart. The last moments of his life were spent in hearing his son-in-law, Mr. Ferguson, read his favourite texts. Just before his death, he said:

"The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice, the voice that calls me home;"

and then breathed his last in the triumphs of a living faith, in the 64th year of his age. As a man and a Christian he was highly esteemed by all who knew him, and his loss is generally acknowledged. But our loss was his gain; and, in his departure, we can hear the voice of Providence whisper, "Be ye also ready."

Is it not to be hoped that some of his sons may be found worthy to fill the place of such an excellent father? He was a firm and unbending officer and member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and on his death-bed enjoined upon his family an unwavering attachment to the cause which he had himself espoused. To his youngest son, not yet a member of the church by his own profession, he gave the dying injunction to seek for connexion with it, and live a consistent Covenanter. D.

Historical Sketches.

SKETCHES OF COVENANTING MINISTERS IN SCOTLAND.

We have been desired to republish in the Banner the following interesting account of some of the earlier ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Its writer, Rev. James Sprott, of Nova Scotia, we have understood, was brought up in our church, and seems to retain a strong affection and respect for it. We wish that some of our own ministers would give similar sketches of the early ministers of the American Church, who have been called away. A McKinney, a Riley, and others, are worthy of remembrance, and their history should be preserved.

MANSE OF MUSQUODOBOIT, September 27th, 1848.

Mr. Editor,—We had, some years ago, the history of the Secession Church, by Dr. McKerrow, and the history of the Relief Church, by Dr. Struthers. I would like to see a history of the Covenanters, by a chief minister of the party. They belong to an older family than either of those denominations. They claim a close alliance with the Reformation, and profess to be its fairest daughters, and the best visible church. At all events, they are a true branch of the apostolic church,

and belong to the family of the Second Reformation. Their history would form a readable volume for our congregational libraries. Many of their ministers are the sterling gold of the sanctuary, and some of her people are the excellent ones of the earth. They are less known than some aspiring sects; but they are a shrewd, intelligent people; and in life, literature, and morals, they are equal to any other section of the Protestant family of the same extent. They are now making their way to the foreground of society; but I remember when they were a small, sequestered people. They worshipped in tents and tabernacles, and had but one religious building in Galloway and Nithsdale. They assembled often upon the mountain and the moor, and were called hill-men. I have attended divine service at the tent, when the fields were sprinkled with snow, and the voice of prayer and praise had a peculiar solemnity. My acquaintance with them does not go farther back than the period when the Rev. James Reid returned from America, and the last years of the four Johns, chief ministers of the party, namely, the Rev. John Thorburn, the Rev. John Curtis, Rev. John Fairley, and the Rev. John M'Millan. I have often heard the old people in Nithsdale and Clydesdale speak with admiration and affection of the four Johns, as lovely examples of Christian character and impressive patterns of ministerial fidelity. They did much to stem the torrent of declining virtue, and promote the cause of truth and righteousness in a bad time. I met with a Mr. Waugh, thirty years ago, at Tatamagouche, from Annandale, who left the country when they were in the flower of their fame, and the old man regarded their ministry as the golden era of Cameronian history. I have heard Mr. M'Millan preach, and had some knowledge of the elder Fairley. John Fairley fearlessly attacked the reigning follies of the age, and preached the gospel in a familiar but forcible style of eloquence. In his great field days, and in contending for the testimony of the martyrs, he was unsparing in the use of arrows, often broke a lance with the pope, and drove rusty nails into our venerable establishment, and lashed the Secession and the Relief for their declensions. The younger Fairley was a gentleman of a well-stored mind and polished manners, but he lacked the vehemence and pathos of his father. After the death of this vigorous old minister, the Rev. Thomas Henderson, of Kilmacolm, took up his weapons, and attempted the same style of preaching; but it was the flashes of an expiring lamp, for noble irregularities of speech may be forgiven in original genius, which will not be tolerated in their several imitators. Henderson and Mason of Clydesdale were on the field at the same time. I have frequently heard both. Their style of preaching was different. Mr. Mason preached down sin and Satan, and preached up Christ and Him crucified. Henderson fearlessly denounced the vices of the age, and attempted to amend the manners of the world. Mr. Mason preached the pure doctrines of faith and the sublime precepts of Christianity. Mr. Henderson was perpetually clearing away the rubbish for the foundation, and often spent nearly as much time in picking out the weeds which spring up in the court of the temple, as in examining the symmetry and proportions of the stately building, or as in pointing out its beauty and stability to the audience. Near the end of the last century, Reid, Thomson, and Rowatt, introduced a better style of preaching among the hill-men. They were popular preachers, and attracted great crowds to the tent in Galloway and Nithsdale. I have never seen such gatherings since in any part of the world, and I would go a long way to see such another assembly.

On the morning of a high communion Sabbath, our flowing valleys were in motion; and for ten, or fifteen, or twenty miles, you might have seen pastoral groups streaming away to the hill of Zion; and the services were sometimes long and protracted; and before the last psalm would be sung—which was loud as the sound of many waters—the dew-drops were on their plaids, “and the sentinel stars had set their watch in the skies.” And although they were not all good Christians who mingled in such scenes, yet I would not exchange the fervour of hill-side piety for any thing I have seen in the noblest cathedral. The religion of many in our day consists in hearing sermons, and in outward observances; but their religion consisted in vigorous exertions, in humble dependence upon God, and in earnest prayer. Conversion in this country is often a matter of opinion, feeling, or fancy; but with them it was receiving the truth, and walking in the love of it. There was a remarkable harmony between their profession and their practice. This devotional spirit was deepened and strengthened by their frequent prayer-meetings, and the care with which they instructed their children on Sabbath evenings. Every religious family was a Sabbath school. I lately met with an old Cameronian lady near Cape Sable; I asked her what she thought of a Sabbath in Nova Scotia. She said she had never seen a Sabbath evening kept as it ought to be kept since she left her father’s house. I fear that much of this devotional spirit has fled from our people, and it is not likely to return unless the Divine Spirit is poured down from on high. The elder Rowatt was a very scriptural preacher, and had singular gifts in prayer. Thompson had a speculative mind, and often embarked in the controversies of the day. The Rev. James Reid was a good minister in the fullest sense of the expression, and at one time filled a large space in the public mind in Galloway. He was a well-balanced character, and had a combination of excellencies. His course was that of a stream which does not attract you by its brawling noise, but gains upon you by the purity of its waters, and the beauty of its banks. These ministers often censured public measures in church and state; but they lived in the stormy period of the war, when William Pitt ruled the nation, and Dr. Hill was the leader of the Moderates in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. But though not fierce in loyalty, they had no sympathy for radicalism and rebellion. Fifty years ago, I recollect having seen one of their church members doing penance at Stonekirk, before the congregation, and was handsomely reproved by the Rev. James Reid, for frequenting reformed clubs, and keeping company with those who were enemies to the cross and the crown. Since that period, the party has risen in importance and usefulness. They have spread their tents in many parts of Scotland, have unfurled their banner in Upper Canada and the South Seas, and have taken a deep interest in the cause of missions. They are the stanch adherents of the Kirk and the Covenant, and have survived those ages of darkness and blood, when the minister’s home was the mountain and moor. Like oil upon the waters, they still remain a distinct party, and show little anxiety to unite with any other denomination. It is said, however, that they are beginning to relinquish some of their long-cherished prejudices, and they begin to feel, if they would improve society, they must join with other Christians in sending proper representatives, and not retard its improvement by withholding their influence.

Christianity has already greatly elevated the tone of civil government. It has softened the spirit of despotism, mitigated the horrors of war,

purified the civil code, and introduced a benevolent spirit into all the relations of life. It would be the true interest of nations, as well as families and individuals, to cultivate the plant of renown, and to regulate their movements by the precepts of Christianity. We must not bring our religion to our politics, but rather bring our politics to our religion. We have an immense mass of unsanctified talent on the floors of legislation, and all classes begin to feel heavily the curse of unrighteous rulers. We can hardly expect the blessing unless we have more integrity and Christianity in our national councils. Piety and virtue are the firmest supports of civil government. Righteousness exalts a nation, but depravity is the disgrace and downfall of any people. The name of McMillan was a household word among the Cameronians for several generations; but it has now become extinct in the ministry, and their most brilliant vineyards have passed into the hands of the Symingtons, a family in Renfrewshire, of talent and acquirements, of high rank in literature, and favourably known as authors. But G——, and G——, and N——, have already nearly reached the same eminence, and shall soon share the same honours. The Rev. Thomas Neilson of Rothesay, is a second Guthrie, and by the force of character has compelled the whole population to unloose their purse-strings, throw off their congregational debt, and become the first free church in Scotland.

The king of shadows has drawn a deep and dark curtain over the Cameronian vineyard since I first saw it. It is wholly cultivated by a new class of labourers, and all its ministers have put off their priestly robes, and gone to the home of the departed. A feeling of loneliness steals over my mind, and I feel the tediousness of the wilderness, when I recollect that so many of my early fellow-travellers have crossed the Jordan, and been promoted to the service of the upper sanctuary, for which they were so much better prepared. We are in the wilderness—they have reached the Canaan above. We see only the dawn of the divine life—they enjoy its meridian splendour. Here we struggle with passions and corruptions, but their piety is refined to the brightest fire, and their devotion partakes of the character of heaven. Their ashes, too, mingle not with the red man, but repose among their own people. It is sweet to lay our bones in the bosom of our native land, for the flowers which we loved on earth shall brighten around our graves, and the trees whose gentle murmurs pleased the ear shall hang their shadows over our sleeping dust. But it is some consolation that the resurrection morning will dawn as early on our graves in the green woods of America as in North Britain, and the sun-burnt African and the fair European shall rise at the same time to meet his Saviour and Judge, and be welcomed to his kingdom.—Farewell.—I remain yours truly,

JOHN SPROTT.

Miscellaneous Communications.

[For the Banner of the Covenant]

THE INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEM.

To the Editors of the Banner of the Covenant.

GENTLEMEN,—In my last letter I mentioned that the Independent and Congregational plan of supporting gospel ordinances in use with us, while it was liable to grave objections as being unscriptural in character, schismatic in its tendency, selfish and unjust in its operation, and as practically denying the unity of the church, and the chief end of the

existence of the church to be the conversion of the world,—had another objectionable feature of a very important nature, namely, that it had proved inefficient in supporting Home Missions.

If the preceding charges be considered as proved, this one will excite no surprise; it will rather be considered as the natural result of a system which concentrates the labours of Christians among themselves, and makes no permanent arrangement for supplying the spiritual destitution of others, but resigns to voluntary associations the duty of supplying the word of life to the dark places of our country, as if it were no part of the business of the church, and leaves it to be inferred that the congregation which takes up an annual collection for Home Missions does a highly meritorious work. But, whatever opinion may be entertained of the general character of the system, this fact cannot be denied that the Home Missions of our church are not at all provided for by it, and that annual collections have hitherto proved to be an uncertain and inefficient support for this or any other great work.

Those persons who are acquainted with the state of our church, need not be told that Reformed Presbyterians are scattered over almost the whole continent of North America; that they are to be found in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Upper and Lower Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Oregon, Illinois, Indiana, Tennessee, Ohio, South Carolina, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and New York; that frequently they are not as yet in sufficient numbers to support a regularly organized congregation in one place; that they ardently love the doctrines of the gospel which they learned in childhood, and the scriptural government and worship of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and that in many places they are the only candlesticks of the light of the gospel in the localities where they live. They love the people of God, too; and when the Sabbath day returns, they think of the solemn holy days when they went with the multitude to God's house, and then they turn their eyes on the little group which in other lands they led up to the sanctuary; but there is no church, no Sabbath school near, and they can only pray and weep, and endeavour as well as they may to train their own households to fear the Lord.

From brethren in such circumstances the Presbyteries and Board of Missions of our church are constantly receiving the most urgent and affecting letters and calls for the preaching of the word, were it only once a year. "Send us a Scripture reader (say they,) a Sabbath school agent, or even a member of the church to visit us, and to show that you have not cast us off, that you still consider us as brethren in the Lord, that we have still an interest in your prayers. You love the souls of perishing heathen,—surely you will have compassion on your own countrymen who are fast sinking into heathenism around us. You send beloved missionaries many thousands of miles across the ocean, that the poor idolaters of India may hear the blessed name of Jesus; will you not send some one a short distance in your own land to declare that precious name to those who have sat with you around his holy table? You have sent books and teachers to the poor children of Africa; we pray you forget not the children of America, and they will become your helpers in this good work."

And if you have heard the agents of the Board who have visited them tell how cordially they were received, how fondly welcomed, and how heartily sustained by the prayers and labours of these scattered brethren, you will feel that there is in reality something more in the communion of saints than those suppose who have never been deprived of it. I

am afraid few of us pray for the peace of Jerusalem as they do, and fewer still would travel twenty-five miles in a winter night to have the privilege of hearing the gospel preached. They are prepared, too, to make sacrifices, and to contribute a proportion of their income for the cause of Christ, that would surprise many of our comfortable church members.

But why, it may be asked, does not the Board of Missions respond to these urgent calls; why does it not send out preachers to visit the vacant congregations, and Sabbath school agents to establish Sabbath schools wherever there are societies, and colporteurs to visit the scattered sheep and gather them into an organized condition,—wherever practicable, supply them with Sabbath school libraries and tracts, and thus not only encourage and help them, but put them in a position of active usefulness, and engage them directly and at once in the great work of evangelizing the world? Look at the great and peculiar advantages which the Reformed Presbyterian Church enjoys for this work, in the institution of social worship, to which all her members have been habituated. Wherever there are two of them, they can meet together, were it on the top of the Rocky Mountains, and claim the promise of the Saviour's presence. Again, see how the providence of God has scattered them over the land, as if to give opportunity for bringing out the blessings of his own institution, and to have materials to fill up the book of remembrance which he keeps of such meetings; and if you add the Sabbath school and the library, you have the mission church of our Lord doing his work, and blessed with his presence, and growing up to the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Look again at the multitudes whom the providence of God has driven out from the tyranny, oppression, and popery of the old world, and sent to us, that we may teach them the way of salvation. From Ireland, France, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, and Portugal, God has sent us, not hundreds, nor thousands, but millions, that here they may learn that gospel which could not find its way to them at home, and may return to teach their countrymen the way of salvation. Why should not the Reformed Presbyterian Church come forward and take her full share of this work? Does she doubt the correctness of her position, the orthodoxy of her creed, the efficacy of the gospel she teaches, or the call of providence to engage in it? Is she not increasing daily in numbers, and extending her territory? Why, then, do not her officers lengthen her cords, and strengthen her stakes? The reason may be easily understood. They have not the funds. The congregations which are organized have forgotten to love their neighbours as themselves, and so the amount necessary for the maintenance of ten or twelve agents in the neglected parts of the northern and western country cannot be procured; the price of one hundred libraries cannot be had; thousands of Testaments which ought to be distributed, lie on the shelves of the Bible Society's warehouse; churches which should be planted or watered, are neglected, and souls perish. Let us awaken to the reality of our position as a church of Christ, and actively engage in his work, amend our financial plans so as to suit the scriptural principles of our church and the duty to which God calls us; and in the spirit of true Covenanters, first give our own selves to the Lord, and then to his church and his work in the earth, lest the kingdom of heaven be taken from us, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

A LAYMAN.

SHOULD MINISTERS JOIN SECRET SOCIETIES?

The following article from the New England Puritan, is worthy of attention. In this day, when secret societies are so numerous, and their supporters so ardent, ministers of the gospel may be tempted to give to them their sanction, or, at least, to forbear opposing them. While the writer does not enter into a full discussion of the subject, yet he shows certainly that those who wish to "avoid the appearance of evil," should have nothing to do with them.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Secret societies exist in nearly all of our towns. Some ministers have been initiated into them. And these are sometimes held up to our notice as especial patterns of well doing. And some of the initiated ministers use persuasions to induce their brethren to imitate their example. We are told that thereby we shall do more good in the world, and especially among young men. The question, shall we join these societies, is therefore of some importance to every minister of Christ. My conviction is that it is both inexpedient and wrong for a minister to join these societies. Some of my reasons I would throw into your paper.

But what is a secret society? It is one whose constitution requires its meetings to be held with closed doors, so that none but the initiated can be present. This characteristic of the society does not depend at all on the number of secrets kept, or on what they are. It depends wholly on the fact that none but the initiated can be present at the meetings, and the world can know nothing of what is done in them, except what the initiated are pleased to communicate. Whether the Sons of Temperance have as many secrets as the Odd Fellows, and the Odd Fellows as many as the Masons, are questions to which I attach little importance. The objection against these societies lies against that characteristic of them which is common to them all.

And one reason why I think it is wrong for a minister to be initiated into them is, that they are objects of just and not groundless suspicion. Mutual confidence is essential to the happiness of families and communities; and where suspicion begins, confidence ends. Every man owes it to himself and to the community, to avoid an occasion of just suspicion, and in order to mutual confidence, people must know enough of each others' employment to have evidence that it is honest and not injurious to the rights of others. And they are not required to take a man's word for this. But each one is bound to conduct his business in such an open manner as shall give the community evidence of it. Without this there can be no mutual confidence among neighbours and friends. The man who does not act on this principle, will bring upon himself just suspicion. As this is an important point, it may be well to take a few illustrations. A man boards for a time at a public house. No one knows whence he came or what his business is there. To all inquirers respecting his personal history and his business, he gives an evasive answer. People who know these facts will begin to suspect all is not right. And why? Because he does not conduct himself like an honest man. Honest men are not wont thus to conceal their business. The man that does this *may be an honest man*, but there will be a suspicion, and a just suspicion too, that he is not so. And the detection of many a villain has been traced up to a suspicion fastened on him, simply because he was boarding at a public house, and none knew what his business was there.

Again, a man comes into town and builds a shop with sky-lights. He operates in that shop with closed doors. Every thing that is brought to the shop or carried from it is done with the utmost secrecy. To all inquiries respecting his business, the man replies that it is an honest business, but is careful to let no

one know what it is. The community will begin to suspect that all is not right. And why suspect this? Because he does not conduct his business like an honest man, but like a villain. He conducts his affairs just as a man would who was engaged in counterfeiting money. He also violates an important precept in Scripture: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." It is not enough that we provide things honest in the sight of the Lord, but they must be honest in the sight of men,—because this is essential to that mutual confidence, without which there cannot be social happiness.

Again, a merchant transports merchandise from the depot to his store. Now for him to secure the confidence of his neighbours, it is not necessary to stop and tell any one what he has in his wagon. But let him transport all his goods in the night, or in some other secret way, and all will begin to suspect mischief. And the suspicion will begin at the very point where that merchant departs from the custom of honest men, and takes special pains to prevent his neighbours knowing what he does. And thus with a man in every department of business. Suspicion begins where his studied secrecy begins. So, secret societies, necessarily, are objects of suspicion. Their first principle is at war with that mutual confidence which is essential to all social happiness. They transact their business not as honest men do, but in the manner of villains. We have Bible societies, and Tract societies formed for the amelioration of every kind of human wo. But the constitution of these societies contains no article prohibiting any but the initiated members to be present at their meetings, for they have no need of secrecy. They act for the world, and like honest men they are willing the world should see what they do. But secret societies imitate those who band together for iniquitous purposes. And hence they are objects of just suspicion, and that community must be in an unhealthy moral state that can receive secret societies into its bosom without suspicion. For if all benevolent associations should pattern after them, and all individuals should adopt their characteristic principle, there would be no mutual confidence among mankind, and of course no social happiness in families, neighbourhoods, or larger communities. Secret societies are objects of just suspicion. This is true, both in principle and in practice.

This point being settled, we may ask, should a minister of Christ join such societies? A minister should be above suspicion. The word of God requires us to abstain from all appearance of evil. But does that minister seek to be above suspicion, and abstain from all appearance of evil who is initiated into a society which, from its known characteristic, is an object of just suspicion? Does he not knowingly put himself under suspicion? Does he not put on the appearance of evil? But then he does this for a good end:—That is, he does evil that good may come. And then there is another Scripture in point: "Let not then your good be evil spoken of." Does the minister who goes into a secret society to do good, obey this injunction of the divine word? He does the very thing which this Scripture forbids. I see not how a man can join a society, which, from its known characteristic, is an object of just suspicion, and not put beneath his feet these and all similar injunctions of the word of God. Christ never acted on such a principle,—though he had around him a society of intimate friends possessed of the secrets of his heart and life. These secrets were guarded by no signs nor pass words. He challenged the world to inspect him and his employment. But impostors and fanatics often adopt the secret policy. Ann Lee acted on this principle. She would have none present but her initiated friends when she wrought miracles. She would have the world take their word that miracles were wrought. But Christ wrought his miracles in the presence of friends and enemies. He did his work openly before the world, that all might see and judge for themselves as to what was done. He went down among publicans and sinners to do them good, but he did not fence himself

around with bolted doors and curtained windows, lest the world should see what he did, and hear what he said there. Christ was open and frank. He was above all just suspicion. And in his principles of action Christ is our pattern.

I have thus given one reason why it appears to me to be wrong for a minister to join a secret society. Neither the cause of Christ nor the cause of temperance will in the end suffer by a fair exhibition of the honest thoughts of men on this subject. — A MINISTER. [Chr. Inst.]

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

At the late fall meeting of the Western Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, a protest and appeal came up from the session of the Bethel Church, on the part of two individuals who had been found guilty of immoral conduct in voting for the fourteenth article of the new constitution of the State of Illinois. This article had been submitted to a separate vote, and is as follows :

“The General Assembly shall, at its first session under the amended constitution, pass such laws as will effectually prohibit free persons of colour from immigrating to and settling in this State; and to effectually prevent the owners of slaves from bringing them into this State for the purpose of setting them free.”

In disposing of this case, the substance of the following remarks was submitted. Subsequently, a resolution was adopted in Presbytery requesting that a copy of the remarks should be furnished in order to their publication in the “Banner.” At the time the remarks were made, there was, of course, no expectation that they would be thus called for. They were somewhat hastily prepared, and on a subject which, not living in the State where the matter was specially interesting, had not previously arrested the attention so as to lead to its close examination. They are, however, given substantially as delivered; and chiefly to meet the wishes of the brethren who voted the resolution to that effect, at the late meeting.

Princeton, Nov. 6th, 1849.

M.

REMARKS ON A PROTEST AND APPEAL PRESENTED TO THE WESTERN REFORMED PRESBYTERY.

The question to be decided by Presbytery, having now had the whole case before them, is, shall the appeal be sustained or not? The appellants admit the act charged, and attempt to justify their conduct. Should we sustain the appeal, we too would justify their act. But the appeal cannot be sustained for the following reasons:

Because the fourteenth article voted for would establish laws in the State in opposition to the Testimony of the church. (Chap. xxx. Sec. I.) *“Every government has the right of making laws of naturalization, and every individual possesses the right of expatriation; and both these rights are to be exercised in conformity to the law of God, the Supreme Ruler and Judge.”* Without stopping to show, which it would not be a difficult task to do, that the *article* in its spirit is opposed to the first part of the section quoted from the Testimony, *“Every government has the right of making laws of naturalization, which right must be exercised in conformity to the law of God;”* and but, in passing, adverting to the fact that it is in opposition to the Constitution of the United States, which says, Art. iv. Sec. II. *“The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens of the several States;”* the mere placing the

article in juxtaposition with the latter part of the section from the Testimony will sufficiently show that they involve antagonistic principles. The article says: "*The General Assembly shall pass such laws as will effectually prohibit free persons of colour from immigrating to and settling in this State; and to effectually prevent,*" &c. Our Testimony says, "*That every individual possesses the right of expatriation—to be exercised in conformity to the law of God, the Supreme Ruler and Judge.*" What avails such a right? What is it practically worth, if the crime of having a coloured skin shall for ever sweep the right away, and render it a nullity?

Further, the appeal ought not to be sustained, because the laws authorized to be made by the article are contrary to the letter and spirit of the law of God. Into the question, how far the judicial law delivered to the Israelites, as distinguished from the moral law, is binding upon other nations, it is not necessary to enter. It will, doubtless, be admitted by every intelligent member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, that when in the law there is nothing ceremonial, and nothing specially referring to the peculiar polity of the Israelites; but when in place of any thing of the sort, the law is founded upon a simple principle of moral equity, such law, in its spirit, is binding upon all communities. Let any one compare the laws of God found in Exodus xii. 48, 49, xxii. 21, and xxiii. 29, with the laws required to be made by the fourteenth article of the new constitution. And under what circumstances were these laws given to the Israelites? Under what title, and in what manner did they hold possession of the land of Canaan? Not simply under that general title which other nations hold by: "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath he given to the children of men;" but by a special deed of gift, and by an everlasting covenant. And even before that deed of gift was made to Abraham and his seed, Moses tells us in his song, that, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." And when the time came for God to make good his deed of gift, how did he cause the Israelites to inherit the land? Each tribe has its portion assigned by lot, and each family in all the tribes had its portion of land for an inheritance, which inheritance can under no circumstances be alienated from the heirs of that family, beyond the year of jubilee. "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Here, then, if ever, would be a people amongst whom such laws might be looked for as those contemplated in the fourteenth article. But vain would be the search for any such laws. God enacts, Lev. xix. 33, 34, "*And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.*" Lev. xxv. 35, "*And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee.*" I will refer to but one other law, which will be found a perfect contrast, in letter and spirit, to the article voted for. The article says, "*Laws shall be*

passed to effectually prevent the owners of slaves from bringing them into this State for the purpose of setting them free;" for the Israelites' God enacts, "*Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.*" Deut. xxiii. 15, 16. These men have said, in voting for the article, the master shall not, even though he come of his own accord, liberate his slave amongst us. God says, if he (the slave,) flee from tyranny and oppression, deliver him not up—let him dwell where he pleases—oppress him not.

That the spirit of these laws is of universal obligation, is not a matter of mere assumption, is susceptible of proof. Let it be kept in remembrance that Canaan has been given to Abraham's seed for an everlasting possession. Theirs is then the land, and they will yet again inherit it. But when actually restored to their own land, the old judicial law will not be more obligatory upon them than any other people. Yet God has enacted, in view of such a restoration, Ezek. xlvii. 22, 23, "*And it shall come to pass that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord God.*" This, it is presumed, ought to settle the matter with all who would be guided by the light and truth of God's word.

But I give as another reason why the appeal should not be sustained, the act condemned by the session as an immorality is in violation of the golden rule, "*All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*" Matt. vii. 12. Let but those men put their souls in the souls' stead of those two classes—persons of colour immigrating to better their condition, and slaves whose masters are willing to free them from the yoke—and would they desire that such legislation should take place in reference to themselves? Surely, but one answer can be given to such a question—NO.

It is, however, contended, that the design of the vote was to secure the best interests of both white and coloured persons. Can it be that any one seriously believes that such legislation as that contemplated, was necessary to prevent the State of Illinois from being overrun and taken possession of by coloured persons? In the former constitution there was no article such as the fourteenth, and no law existed such as is contemplated by it: yet nothing of the kind took place, and no one apprehended any danger of such events. And as to promoting the good of coloured persons by such laws, admitting for a moment that it might be for their good, it is certainly doing evil that good may come, which is most strongly condemned by the word of God. The end will not justify the means. I too have been, and still am, in favour of colonizing, as far as practicable, our coloured population on the coasts of Africa. Those colonies, in the mean time, presenting the only places where persons of colour can enjoy their rights, and stand forth in all the dignity of Christian men; whilst they are so many stars of hope to Africa—each colony a centre from which Christianity and civilization

shall radiate, until that gross darkness which, like a dark funeral pall has so long hung over down-trodden Africa, shall be dissipated; the Sun of Righteousness rise with healing in his wings; the people that sat in darkness see a great light, and Ethiopia stretch out her hands to God. But what then? shall we force the colonists thither by such laws as are contemplated in the article? God forbid.

But the appellants affirm that they acted conscientiously. Admit this, yet it does not make the action right. Paul lived in all good conscience when he was a persecutor and blasphemer. The conscience may not be rightly instructed, or it may be seared. Let us then carry an appeal from those men acting evidently in the dark, to them when better informed, and perhaps they will then be disposed to withdraw their own appeal, and conform to the judgment of the session. *



PROCEEDINGS AT A MEETING OF THE YOUTH OF REV. H. M'MILLAN'S
CONGREGATION, MASSIE'S CREEK, OHIO.

We have great pleasure in publishing the following account of a meeting of the young people in connexion with Rev. H. M'Millan's congregation, Xenia, Ohio. By referring to the *Missionary Advocate*, July, 1838, p. 110, it will be seen that it is nearly twelve years since the youth of that congregation formed themselves into such an association, and for many years they have contributed liberally for the noble object to which they have consecrated their donations. We regret that the beneficiary selected for them did not prove more worthy of their benevolence, but we rejoice that they view this matter in the proper light; that they recognise the great principle that duty is ours, while results are God's. But we have often thought that we should not consider that *all* has been lost, because *all* has not been gained. Although the heathen youth, who was educated by their contributions, has not become a *Christian*, yet we think he has ceased to be a *heathen*: and his influence, if not altogether *for* the truth, will not be altogether *against* it. He certainly will not sustain and advocate the absurdities and abominations of Hinduism, and we trust he may give due credit to the efforts of the Missionaries to promote the welfare of his countrymen. And may we not hope, also, that the Holy Spirit may yet cause the seed which has appeared so long to be dead, to germinate and bring forth fruit? It is by no means *impossible*, and we think it is not even *improbable*. We have frequently thought that some of these wanderers would yet be reclaimed, and at all events we hope that their dying moments will be blessed by the influence of the holy truths which with so much earnestness and care were impressed upon them. We are glad that our young friends appreciate the duty and necessity of *prayer* in this matter, and we hope that while they will present their supplications on behalf of their new beneficiary, when he shall have been obtained, they will also remember most fervently their former one, if yet alive.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

At a late meeting of the youth of the Rev. H. McMillan's congregation the following resolutions were adopted by them:

Resolved, 1st, That we pledge ourselves for the support of one beneficiary in the Mission School in India, under the care of the Rev. J. R. Campbell, and that he is hereby authorized to procure said beneficiary.

2d. That we request a quarterly correspondence with Mr. Campbell in relation to our beneficiary until he is prepared to write himself, and that the correspondence be then continued by him.

3d. That a committee be appointed to forward these resolutions with an accompanying letter to Mr. Campbell.

It was our pleasure to be present at this meeting, and rarely have we attended one that afforded so much satisfaction to all concerned. It being the quarterly meeting for catechetical exercises by the Pastor of the church, the subject brought before them was the first three petitions which formed the lesson in course. This gave him a fine opportunity of bringing before them and impressing on their minds the importance of the missionary work, and the part they were to act in causing the kingdom of the Lord to come, and his will to be done in the earth as it is done in heaven. That his labours on that day were not in vain may be seen from the fact that immediately on the close of the exercises the above resolutions were adopted.

The spirit manifested by the association was such as should characterize all efforts in so great and so good a cause. It is well known that for a number of years the quarterly contributions of this association have been given for the support of a boy in Mr. Campbell's school. Their efforts so far, however, have been crowned with little success. The boy, after remaining some years in the school and making considerable progress in his studies, returned again to his idols. Admonished by this fact that something more than money is necessary to the success of the missionary work—that the morning and evening prayer must go up for the blessing of God to rest upon their efforts; and nothing discouraged by the ill success of their past efforts, and taking all the blame of the failure to themselves, they again entered upon their work determined not only to be more liberal in their contributions for the future, but also more importunate in their prayers for the blessing of God to go with them.

Their example is worthy of the imitation of the youth in every congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. We know that the youth of our churches in the city usually, as a Sabbath school, make their weekly and quarterly contributions to this work, and their efforts are highly commendable. But we speak more particularly in reference to the youth of our country congregations, who cannot meet weekly in a Sabbath school capacity. Let the youth of these churches enter into this work in this or some other way—let the pastors of the different congregations endeavour to impart to the rising generation a missionary spirit—let the great work of evangelizing the world be the subject most thought of and prayed for, and soon the knowledge of the Lord will fill and cover the earth as the waters fill and cover the channels of the great deep.

Christian Union.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

CONFERENCE OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES ON CHRISTIAN UNION.*

The Conference met pursuant to adjournment, in the lecture-room of the First Presbyterian Church, (Dr. Campbell's) Albany, New York, November 1st, 1849, at eleven o'clock, A. M., and in the absence of the President, was called to order by the Secretary, whereupon the Rev. Dr. Campbell was called to the chair. At his request the Rev. J. P. Miller opened the meeting by prayer. There were present

From the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States—the Rev. Dr. Campbell.

From the Associate Reformed Synod of New York—the Rev. Dr. Proudfit, the Rev. A. H. Wright.

From the Associate Synod of North America—the Rev. J. P. Miller, the Rev. S. F. Morrow, the Rev. Isaac Law.

From the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America—the Rev. Dr. M'Leod, the Rev. A. G. Wylie.

From the Associate Synod of North America—the Rev. H. H. Blair, the Rev. Dr. Bullions.

From the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church of the West, and the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, there was no representation.

A communication from the delegates of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South was presented by the Rev. Dr. Proudfit. It was received, read, and on motion, laid on the table for future consideration.

The Rev. Dr. M'Leod announced to the Conference the decease of the Rev. Dr. Black, one of his colleagues of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and presented some remarks on his life and character.

The Rev. H. H. Blair intimated the decease of the Rev. Andrew Stark, LL.D., of the delegation of the Associate Synod of North America—whereupon it was

Resolved, That this Conference have heard with unfeigned sorrow of the decease of these eminent servants of God, formerly members of this body, and that while they receive the intimation in submission to the Divine will, they would desire to regard it as specially admonitory to themselves.

The delegations were called upon to report the action of the Supreme Judicatories of their respective Churches on the proceedings of the last meeting of Conference.

The delegation from the General Assembly reported the action of the last Assembly, as contained in their printed minutes.

The delegation from the Associate Reformed Synod of New York reported that their Synod had approved the proceedings of the last Conference, and re-appointed their delegates.

The delegation from the Associate Synod (represented by the Rev. Mr. Miller, &c.) reported that their Synod had approved of the prosecution of the object, and appointed their delegates.

The delegation from the General Synod of the Reformed Presby-

* This article was in type for the last number, but was overlooked in making up the form.

terian Church reported that their Synod had not met since the last meeting of Conference, and that consequently they had no report to make.

The delegation from the Associate Synod of North America (represented by Rev. Mr. Blair, &c.) reported by reading the published minutes of their Synod on the subject.

The delegation of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South were considered as having reported, by the document already referred to.

Resolved, That a committee of one member from each of the bodies present be appointed to prepare business and report in the afternoon.

Resolved, That Conference take a recess until three o'clock, P. M.

After recess resumed business. Rev. H. H. Blair led in prayer.

The committee to prepare business reported—The report was adopted, and is as follows:

The resolutions above referred to are as follows:

That it is not expedient for this Conference to recommend any new matter for the action of the bodies they represent; but that the present object should be to carry out the intention of the resolutions passed at the last meeting of the Conference in the city of New York; therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That, in order to carry out the design of resolution *third*—(see below)—measures should be taken to bring the subject of *Christian forbearance* more distinctly before the churches, and for the orderly accomplishment of this, it is recommended by Conference to the bodies they represent, to correspond with each other on this subject, and that, in such correspondence, they express the principles by which they are willing to regulate their mutual intercourse in the exercise of this Christian grace.

Resolved, 2d. That in order to carry out more fully the intention of resolution *fifth* (see below) it is desirable that the people of the different bodies here represented, should unite together in meetings for social prayer and other religious intercourse, so far as it may be found practicable.

Resolved, 3d. That it be recommended in reference to resolution *sixth*, (see below) that, so long as either of the churches here represented may continue to act separately in the work of Foreign Missions, they take measures to avoid any interference with locations pre-occupied by any of the others, and that union and co-operation in this work be observed, as highly desirable.

Resolved, 4th. That, in regard to the other resolutions passed at the last meeting of Conference, practical attention to them be again recommended to the bodies here represented.

The resolutions above referred to are as follows:

Resolved, 1. That it is the imperative duty of the followers of Christ to aim at bringing about a union of all the different portions of the household of faith, upon a scriptural basis.

Resolved, 2. That in the judgment of this Convention, it is not only desirable, but practicable, to effect a closer union than that which now exists among the bodies which are here represented, whereby they may more successfully accomplish the great design for which the church was established.

And whereas, the views of the great system of evangelical truth,

as exhibited in the standards of these different churches, namely, in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the Articles of the Synod of Dordrecht, and in the Heidelberg Catechism, are substantially the same, therefore,

Resolved, 3. That it is the duty of these churches to cultivate towards each other the spirit of fraternal affection—to exercise Christian forbearance—to co-operate in all scriptural efforts to promote the common Christianity.

Resolved, 4. That in the judgment of this Convention, while the singing of God's praise is an interesting part of religious worship, and while, for the present, it is left to the different churches to employ whichever of the authorized versions now in use may be most acceptable to them, the sacred songs contained in the book of Psalms are every way suitable and proper for that purpose, and any intimation that they breathe a spirit inconsistent with the gospel is to be regarded as a reflection upon their Divine Author.

Resolved, 5. That where it is practicable, without any surrender of principle, an interchange of ministerial services be recommended, and that the different churches pay respect to each others' acts of discipline, and sustain each other in all scriptural efforts to promote the good order, and to preserve the unity of the church.

Resolved, 6. That, in the prosecution of the work of missions, it is desirable that these different churches should act in concert, the missionaries being accountable, in the exercise of their ministry, to the particular body with which they are ecclesiastically connected.

Resolved, 7. That for the promotion of a better understanding and more intimate intercourse among these different churches, it is desirable that a correspondence be maintained, either by letter or by delegation, as may be judged most expedient.

Resolved, 8. That these resolutions be recommended to the consideration of the different churches represented in this Convention, that they may report their judgment in the premises, and appoint delegates to a future Convention, to be held in the city of Albany, New York, the first day of November next, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

Resolved, That when Conference adjourn, it be to meet on the first Wednesday of September, 1850, at eleven o'clock, A. M., in the Lecture Room of Dr. McLeod's Church, Twelfth Street, New York.

Resolved, That the Secretary publish the proceedings of this meeting in the religious periodicals.

Adjourned, Rev. Dr. Proudfit concluding by prayer. Signed,
JOHN N. McLEOD, *Secretary.*

Missionary Intelligence.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM REV. J. R. CAMPBELL, DATED,

Mission House, Saharanpur, Oct. 6, 1849.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER STUART,—

We are all, just now, overwhelmed with business of various kinds. We are packing up to march to Lodiana to attend the annual meeting of the mission. This *packing up* is a very different thing from getting a valise or carpet-bag in order to go to New York or Pittsburg. Tents have to be got out and put in order for day and night—bullock-carts

to be obtained after much labour and often disappointment, or, in case of failure, they may sometimes be had by application to the public authorities. Personal conveyances come next in order. Then provisions and clothing, medicines, &c., for the way. All the hands necessary for the establishment to be engaged, made pleased, and started. The stuff left behind to be placed under the care of sleepy, faithless watchmen. Some provision to be made for anticipated breaking down by the way, &c., &c. Now it is just in the midst of such a bustle as all these arrangements excite, that I sit down, but still I hope to fill up this scrap of paper. Not having written by the last mail, on account of sickness in our family, I am unwilling to allow another to go without even a line from this station. Our children, one after another, were all sick. Mary Anna's turn came last, and it was much the most severe and protracted. It was a fever of a very bad and dangerous type. Indeed, at several times we feared she would not recover. She is now, I am happy to say, convalescent, and gathering strength, but it is by very slow degrees. Mr. Caldwell's family also have been sick, and his eldest little girl is at present very low, and not expected to live. The disease seems particularly to have prevailed among children. All the rest of us, and of the residents at the station generally, are in good health.

Our missionary affairs go on as usual with satisfaction. Some inquiring the way to Zion—multitudes willing to hear—all much more respectful than formerly—but still few appear to be affected by the truth. In Hindustani preaching I find myself improving in fluency daily, and when by Divine assistance I feel myself able to set forth the gospel message with some degree of point and energy, I feel happier than I can express. Our new church in the city affords a delightful field for preaching to the people. We have been going on pretty well in raising funds to put up a new, neat, and substantial church on the mission premises for English and Hindustani preaching. We have obtained about 1300 rupees, and have no doubt but the rest will come in by degrees. I am about now to trouble you to purchase for us a fine-toned bell, like the one we brought out with us, purchased of Holbrook, I believe, near Boston. Then we want two pedestal lamps, with spare globes and paper domes, chimneys, &c., like those we brought out, and also one dozen wall lamps such as I bought from Cornelius, in July, 1838, with chimneys and globes. Let all the globes be plain, not cut. If you find any *liberal-hearted* friends who are desirous of having a share in the new church at Saharanpur, and will send us these things for the house of God without charge, so much the better.

We have received through Mr. Lowrie the money for Mr. Woodside's house. Some of this has already been expended to render the house at all comfortable as a residence. Mr. Woodside does not think of making any further repairs *on the house itself* for a year or two, desiring to be as economical as possible. The mission premises, by this addition of ground lying so neatly beside them, is now very complete. But if the Lord will, you must come and see all for yourself. We have been distressed to hear of the ravages of the cholera in your Western States. May all your precious lives be spared until this calamity be overpast. By next mail we hope to send the annual report of this station. Our warm Christian love to all friends. We are now engaged in making up our accounts, reports, &c. In haste, and with much affection, your ever-attached brother in the Lord,

J. R. CAMPBELL.

Ecclesiastical Proceedings.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE EASTERN REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD,
IRELAND.

This respected body held its last meeting in Cullybackey, commencing its sessions, July 17th, 1849. The following extracts from their Minutes will form a record of the most important of their transactions of public interest.

Since the last Meeting of Synod, the Rev. W. Close was ordained at Loughmourne, and the Rev. H. Austin at Eskylene.

The Synod, taking into consideration the aspect of Providence, recommends to the Congregations under its care the observance of a day of *humiliation* at an early date. After discussion, it is agreed that the last Thursday of August be observed for this purpose; leave being granted to the congregation of Derry to select a day for attention to this duty that may be convenient for them. And the Synod now appoints the last Thursday of November to be observed as a day of *thanksgiving*.

Resolved, that the next meeting of Synod be held at LONDONDERRY, in the Rev. Jacob Alexander's Meeting-house, on the third Tuesday of July, 1850, at twelve o'clock noon.

Mr. Robert Henry presents his class-tickets and certificates, which are read by the clerk, and are highly satisfactory to the Court. The Synod then proceeds with his examination on the several branches of study;—his answering is regarded by the Court as manifesting close application and distinguished proficiency. The Synod recommends Mr. Henry to the care of the Derry Presbytery for licensure with all convenient speed.

The General Committee of the SUSTENTATION FUND and JUVENILE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION appear in Court, and submit their second report, which is introduced by some preliminary observations by Mr. M'Vicker, and read by Mr. Small.

The report referred to the commercial difficulties, the stagnation of trade, and the general depression in all kinds of business which had characterized the bygone year, and which had largely affected the moneyed interests of the community. Those under the care of Synod had shared in the national calamities, by which their pecuniary resources had been much curtailed; and although they still retained the inclination to do all they ever had done for the cause of God, yet in many cases they were unable to do so for want of means. The Church had also suffered much from the constant tide of emigration; yet the committee had to thank God and take courage that, notwithstanding the unparalleled difficulties with which they had to contend, they were enabled to make a favourable report. The contributions of the people, liberally and cheerfully given, had enabled the committee to pay the usual salaries to the ministers and probationers, and to defray all the other expenses connected with the carrying out of the Church's schemes, leaving a balance of £11 4s. 6d. in the hands of the Treasurer. The report expressed great satisfaction in referring to the fact, that the principles forming the basis of the schemes now in operation and working so happily, were taking deep root in the hearts and minds of the members of the Church, who, in general, were sparing neither labour nor sacrifice in their efforts to advance those noble undertakings. The increased and increasing zeal of the people was strikingly exhibited in this, that since the introduction of the new financial arrangements there had been a gradual advance in the contributions of most of the Congregations. The report made honourable mention of the labours of the Rev. John S. Woodside, now missionary to India, in connexion with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, who, while on a visit to his native land previously to his departure for India, had met with all the Congregations under the care of Synod, and had done much to create a most lively interest on behalf of the missionary enterprise. The great exertions of the Rev. John Nevin, who had been the Synod's agent in carrying out these financial operations, were also spoken of in the high terms of praise to which they were so pre-eminently entitled. The committee had been much refreshed by a visit from George H. Stuart, Esq., of Philadelphia, Treasurer to the Foreign Missionary Society, in connexion with the Church in the United States. This Christian philanthropist, whose praise is in all the Churches, and whose princely liberality is known to all who are acquainted with what American generosity has done to ameliorate the physical, moral, and religious condition of the human family, not only contributed to the funds of the Church *fifty dollars*, but held out the hope that he would favour all our Congregations with a visit next year. Contributions had been made by all the Congregations to the funds of the Foreign Missionary Society, in

connexion with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, and though the amount thus forwarded was not large, yet the good will with which it was furnished was most gratifying. The committee returned their warmest thanks to the local committees, the sessions, and the members of the Church generally, for their untiring and successful efforts to promote and advance their financial affairs. Above all, the committee felt called on to thank the great Head of the Church for his goodness to them during a year of unequalled calamity and distress, in enabling them thus to report favourably regarding their proceedings, and to cherish the hope that now, when prosperity appeared to dawn once more on the nation, they might also anticipate brighter days for the cause of God that had been committed to their hands.

The DERRY PRESBYTERY state that, in laying their annual report before Synod, they feel called upon to record their gratitude to the Church's glorious Head, that notwithstanding the prevalence of disease and mortality, they are still spared in the land of the living, and permitted to continue their labours in the vineyard of the Lord. The Rev. Doctor Henry, though unfitted for a time by severe bodily affliction for public service, has, in the good providence of God, been so far restored as to be able to resume his ministerial duty. In all our Congregations peace and harmony still prevail. The ordinances of grace have been regularly administered. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper has been dispensed at least twice in all our Congregations, since the last meeting of Synod. The days of Thanksgiving and Fasting, appointed by Synod, have been observed. And, notwithstanding the pressure of the times and the weakening effects of emigration, we are furnished with encouraging evidence, by the attachment of our people to the cause of God in our hands, and by their zeal and self-denial in endeavouring to meet their liabilities to the schemes of the Church, that the work of the Lord is at least to some extent prospering in our hands. Sabbath-school instruction is still attended to in our several Congregations. We have had six regular meetings of Presbytery since last meeting of Synod. Mr. Robert Henry, who has, for some time past, completed the course of study required for candidates for the Gospel Ministry in the section of the Church with which we are connected, is recommended to Synod for *general examination*. Mr. George Stewart is still prosecuting his studies with very promising success. He has attended a third Session at the University of Glasgow, and at the close of the Session obtained the degree of A. M. He has also attended one Session at the Theological Hall, Paisley, under the care of Dr. Symington. From the satisfactory testimonials he has received from the several Professors under whom he has studied, and from the evidence furnished to the Presbytery in his examinations, of his acquaintance with the course of study he has been pursuing, Presbytery entertain encouraging hopes regarding his future usefulness.

Presbytery have great pleasure in further reporting that *the Temperance Reformation on total abstinence principles, is progressing among the people under their care.*

The BELFAST PRESBYTERY report that, since the last meeting of Synod, they have held six regular meetings and several *pro re nata*. On the 7th of September, Mr. Hugh Austin, having submitted the usual pieces of trial, was licensed to preach the everlasting Gospel.

At a meeting of Presbytery, October 17th, a unanimous call from the Congregation of Loughmourne was laid before the Court, addressed to Mr. W. Close. This call, Mr. Close accepted; and he was accordingly ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and pastoral charge of that Congregation, on the 7th of November. Doctor Houston and the Rev. M. Smyth, and Rev. J. Alexander, being the ministers who officiated on the occasion.

The Congregation of Eskylene addressed a call to Mr. H. Austin on the 21st of December, and Mr. Austin having accepted it, was set apart to the ministerial office and pastoral charge of Eskylene Congregation, on the 24th of April;—the ordination services being conducted by Doctor Houston and the Revs. M. Smyth, W. Close and J. Alexander.

It is with regret we record the removal from this country by emigration of one of our co-Presbyters, the Rev. John Nevin. The vacancy of Ballymoney addressed a call to him, which was presented at a meeting of Presbytery, on the 13th of March. Mr. Nevin, however, declined to accept of it, and intimated his intention of carrying into effect his long contemplated design of emigrating to the United States of America. This he did a short time subsequently. In Mr. Nevin's removal we have sustained a serious loss. The valuable services he rendered to our Church, in connexion with the Sustentation Fund Scheme and Missionary Associations, are well known and universally acknowledged. It will be in the recollection of all that for these services he received the cordial thanks of Synod at its last meeting. While we cannot, therefore, but deplore the loss of such a devoted servant of Christ, and at such a time, we are

in part consoled by the thought that a section of the Church with which we are intimately allied, and in the prosperity of which we feel the deepest interest, will enjoy the advantage of his labours. It was with great satisfaction, therefore, that we learned that our American brethren had received Mr. Nevin, on his arrival among them, in a manner the most cordial. We wish him every success.

Presbytery further report that the days of Humiliation and Thanksgiving appointed by Synod were observed by the different congregations under their inspection, and ordinances continue to be administered as formerly. Mr. Robert Johnson was examined by Presbytery previously to his commencing collegiate studies in November last.

We have now under our care the vacancies of Ballymoney and Liverpool;—from the latter we have received a petition which we beg to refer to Synod. We regret to report that, latterly, we have not been able to extend to our vacancies such a supply of preaching as we could have desired. We have only one licentiate, Mr. John Marcus, whose labours, in the different departments of the Church, have been very acceptable.

In conclusion, we desire to record our gratitude to the great Head of the Church for the peace, harmony, and kind feeling which prevail among us; and for the generous liberality with which our people have generally contributed for the support of the Gospel, notwithstanding the greatly depressed state of the country. The conduct of many, in regard to this matter, is beyond all praise. And we cherish the hope, that the opulent members of our Church will, on seriously considering the importance and scripturality of the plan of supporting the gospel now in operation, feel it to be their duty to increase their subscriptions, to prevent a failure of the measures. We have reason still to bless God and take courage.

Moved by the Rev. Jacob Alexander, seconded by Dr. Henry, and carried with the cordial approbation of the members of the Court, that VISITATION PRESBYTERIES be held in all the Congregations, and that their state be reported to Synod; and that, as far as practicable, the members of the different Presbyteries co-operate on these occasions.

Resolved, that the Synod strongly recommends to the Eldership of our Church, individual and united effort, in their several spheres of labour, in promoting a revival of practical godliness, and extending, in their several localities, a knowledge of the truth.

Moved as OVERTURE, by the Rev. Jacob Alexander, that the Scriptural authority for the observance of public worship on week-days, preceding and succeeding the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, be matter of consideration till next meeting of Synod, at which time the result of their deliberations shall be brought forward.

Mr. James Stuart, Commissioner from Loughmourne Congregation, gives an interesting account of the erection, by subscription, of a very tasteful monument at the grave of the late Rev. Doctor Paul. It appears that Mr. Stuart was the only person who applied for subscriptions, which were given, in all instances, with great cheerfulness; and that, after the expense of the monument has been fully met, there is a balance in his hand. It is exceedingly gratifying to the members of Synod to hear of this mark of respect for the memory of their highly esteemed brother; and they appoint Doctors Alexander and Houston with the Rev. W. Close, and Messrs. J. M'Vicker, W. Montgomery, J. Blain, J. Stuart and J. M'Bride, a Committee of Consultation respecting the most suitable appropriation of the surplus.

[For the Banner of the Covenant.]

RECENT MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA REFORMED PRESBYTERY.

At a recent meeting of the Philadelphia Reformed Presbytery, the following business of interest to the church was transacted. Five students of divinity—Messrs. Spencer L. Finney, John M'Millan, Reilly M'Millan, W. T. Wylie, and William S. Darragh, appeared before Presbytery, and delivered trial discourses, as specimens of their progress in the study of divinity. These young men give promise of great usefulness, if spared to enter upon the work of the ministry. When great and good men are falling in their high places, it is cheering to witness young men coming forward freely, and enlisting under the banner of Prince Messiah. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."—The attention

of Presbytery was also directed to the subject of contributions for benevolent purposes. A committee was appointed to take the subject into consideration, and report what action, if any, is necessary. Whereupon, the committee reported the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, 1st, That Presbytery require each member of the several congregations under their care, to contribute conscientiously for the support of the Theological Seminary, and also for Domestic and Foreign Missions.

2nd. That each minister be directed to preach a sermon on this subject, bringing it prominently before the attention of his people, and exciting them to greater diligence in this good work.

As the subject referred to is one of great importance, and should be one of deep interest to the church in general, it is hoped that these resolutions will be faithfully carried out. Every member of the church, old and young, should be doing something for the Messiah's kingdom, and thus aiming to promote the divine glory. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

The records of the sessions of the various churches, under the care of Presbytery, were examined by committees appointed for the purpose; and being approved, were signed by the officers of Presbytery, and returned to the congregations to which they belonged. It is hoped that the exercise of the supervisory power, which the Presbytery is bound to maintain over all the churches under its care, will tend to secure regularity and good order in the proceedings of the lower courts.

Editorial.

A NEW YEAR—1850.

In commencing the present volume of the Banner, we have dispensed with the formality of an Introduction, since the objects of the publication, and the manner in which it is designed to be conducted, may be considered sufficiently well known. We feel, however, that we ought not to allow another period of time to present itself without some serious reflections, and especially as this year commences the second half of a century. In times of old the people of God regarded the Fiftieth Year as peculiarly sacred, as the commencement of a new era. Although we live under a different dispensation, and are released from the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law, yet we should not neglect any consideration which is calculated to promote our spiritual improvement.

If we look to the beginning of this century, we will notice a great contrast with the present time. A large part of the thickly settled regions of our country was then a wilderness, where the white man was seldom seen. The steamboat and the steamship—the railroad and the locomotive—the magnetic telegraph—and many other remarkable and very useful inventions, were unknown. The institutions of benevolence, which are now operating with so much efficiency, with hardly an exception, had then no existence. The means of obtaining knowledge were scanty and expensive; and the ordinances of religion were, comparatively, but very inadequately enjoyed. When we consider how multiplied are our blessings, we have the most abundant demonstration of the duty of gratitude to that Being who has so highly favoured us.

With the mercies we enjoy, our obligation to serve God increases. We have resources and opportunities far superior to those possessed at the commencement of this century, and certainly we should use them for the promotion of the Divine glory. We can obtain the necessaries and comforts of life so much more abundantly and more cheaply, that we should contribute far more for the treasury of the LORD. We can issue and circulate the printed volume at so much less cost, that we should distribute the Word of Life, the religious tract, the book of useful information, far more widely. Distant countries have been brought so much nearer to us by the facilities of travelling, that we should send out far more missionaries. In short, our means of doing good are so much greater, that we ought to be in labours far more abundant. *The debt we owe to the past, we must pay to the future.* We should endeavour to live so much to the benefit of society, as that the progress of improvement, so far as we are concerned, may be as great in the next fifty years, as it has been in the past.

No doubt those who may live in the year 1900 will look back to the present year with feelings similar to those with which we regard the commencement of this century. Discoveries, now unthought of, will doubtless have then been made; and the condition of those who live at that time will be as superior to ours, as ours is to that of those who lived fifty years ago. Then, we may hope, the ravages of famine or pestilence, will be successfully counteracted, and health and plenty be found in every land. Then, wars, there is reason to believe, will be turned into peace, and the rights of man be acknowledged and enjoyed. Then, we trust, "the dark spirit of Slavery" will have been driven from our earth for ever, and every part of the globe will hear the joyful sound of salvation by the cross of CHRIST. Then, in a word, we may cherish the hope, the *Millennium* will have come.

Whether such expectations shall be realized, depends much on us. As we reap what others have sown, so as we labour will those who follow us derive benefit or loss. The influence of what we do may advance or may retard that period, for God has connected the fulfilment of his purpose with the employment of appropriate instrumentalities. We should feel, then, feel deeply, our *responsibility* to those who follow us. Shall we so act as that they may look back to us with regret and condemnation, as leaving them a legacy of evil, as delaying their enjoyment of promised good,—or shall we rather so labour in GOD'S cause, as that they may regard us with grateful love, and consider us as their benefactors? Certainly every one will choose the latter, rather than the former.

BRETHREN! WRITE FOR US.

There are many in our church, both of the ministry and the laity, who hold the pens of ready writers, and who could do much good by furnishing some communications for our pages. We consider it as *unreasonable* that two or three should do all the labour of thinking and writing, while others should derive any improvement or pleasure which may thus result, as that a few persons should do all the labour of procuring food, or clothing, or any thing else necessary for subsistence, while others are fed, and clothed, and

provided for without any exertion of their own. We think it unreasonable to expect or require that Editors, especially if they have other and more important duties, should do all the writing for a periodical. In fact, it is rather their proper business simply to arrange and prepare for publication what may be furnished to them by others. We have had reason to regret that so few of the members of our church write for our pages, and we therefore speak the more plainly.

But there is another consideration, which ought not to be overlooked. What is published in the magazine or newspaper, is read by many who could never hear the voice of the person who thus addresses them: as all wish an audience when they speak, in this way the audience can be greatly multiplied. And, further, what is spoken too often perishes with the moment it was uttered; but what is printed may be preserved for years, and referred to time after time. How wise is it, then, for those who can do good by speaking, to do *more* good by writing! And are there not many who have thoughts which circumstances may prevent them from uttering with the voice, which they could make known by the printed page, to direct, to animate, to warn their fellow-men? *Brethren, write for us.* Let us receive your assistance, and you will do good and get good.

A PLEASING RESPONSE.

In our November number we called attention to the contribution made by the pupils at the Mission School at Saharanpur, to purchase a Library, expressing the hope that the suggestion of our respected Missionary, Mr. Woodside, would receive notice, and that the money would be raised *above par*, by the contributions of the friends of heathen youth. We are happy to be able to state that this appeal has had a cordial response. A remittance in money for this object is acknowledged on the cover of this number, and more, we hope, will be received. Besides this, a library of nearly two hundred volumes has been contributed by the Bible Class of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church in this city. At the close of one of its late meetings, a member of the class called attention to Mr. Woodside's letter on this subject; and it was resolved that every one connected with the class, and any others who might be disposed to unite in the good work, should contribute either such books as were indicated in the letter, or, if preferred, in money. As the result, about two hundred volumes have been collected, which, marked with the names of the donors, are to be sent to India as soon as practicable. It is hoped that some similar plan may be taken in other places, and the number of books still greatly increased. Many have works on hand which are of little value or interest to them, which would be very useful and highly prized by the youth of India; will they not send them out for this purpose? Mr. Woodside appealed especially to the congregations in Philadelphia and New York, with which he had been more intimately acquainted; but while all of these, we hope, will respond to his call, we trust that no others will disregard it. By a book thus furnished, with the donor's name recorded in it, each individual sends something to India to express his personal interest in the education of these native youth—something to testify his desire for the wel-

fare of the heathen. Too far removed to make them hear the sound of the voice, each one who sends a book can *speak to them by it*. We hope they may receive such memorials from *every one* of our readers.

THE SEMINARY.

The Sessions of the Theological Seminary were commenced at the appointed time, the first Monday of December. The following students are in attendance: Messrs. John M'Millan, G. R. M'Millan, W. S. Darragh, W. T. Wylie, S. L. Finney, Robert Patterson, R. Gaily, James S. Scott, J. M'Corckle, J. Robinson. All these have entered upon their studies with suitable diligence; and the church may reasonably cherish the hope that they will be very useful in her service, if they are spared to labour in the vineyard of the LORD. In the mean time, as so much of the welfare of every member of the church depends upon the character of the Ministry, we hope that the Seminary will not be forgotten or lightly regarded in the supplications of all who seek the good of Zion.

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN PHILADELPHIA.

It will please our readers, we are sure, to learn, that notwithstanding the increase of Reformed Presbyterian Churches in this city, all are enjoying great prosperity. At recent communions, there were added in the Fourth Church, ten; in the Third Church, thirty-four; in the Second Church, ———; and in the First Church, forty-eight. The Fifth Church has almost completed the erection of a neat and convenient house of worship.

IRISH PRESBYTERIAN HOME MISSION.

As many of our readers contributed to this mission, whose cause was so ably presented by the Rev. Dr. Dill and Rev. J. Simpson, in their late visit to this country, and all, we are confident, feel a desire for its success, we subjoin a statement recently published of the amount of donations. In our next number we propose to publish a letter from Dr. Dill, showing the progress which has been made in evangelizing some parts of Ireland.

Amount received, \$25,747 54, of which from New York, \$8,018 48, Philadelphia, \$7,119 05, Pittsburgh, \$3,289 09, Albany, \$7,007 15.

LETTER TO REV. DR. COOKE.

In our next number we design to publish a very able Letter to Rev. Dr. Cooke, by a Friend to Reform. Dr. C. is regarded as the great bulwark of the Endowment System in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The writer of this letter shows, in a very able manner, the evils of that scheme, and points out the *more excellent way*. The statistics and tables of comparison which it presents, are very valuable.

MEMOIR OF REV. DR. BLACK.

In consequence of the earnest request of the family of our late beloved Father, Rev. Dr. Black, a Memoir of his Life is to be prepared by Rev. Dr. Wylie, for so many years his most intimate friend. This Memoir is to be prefixed to an Edition of Dr. Black's Sermons, which it is contemplated shortly to publish. Dr. Wylie has also been very urgently solicited to write a shorter Biography for publication in the Banner; which he has consented to do, and which will probably appear in our next number.

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